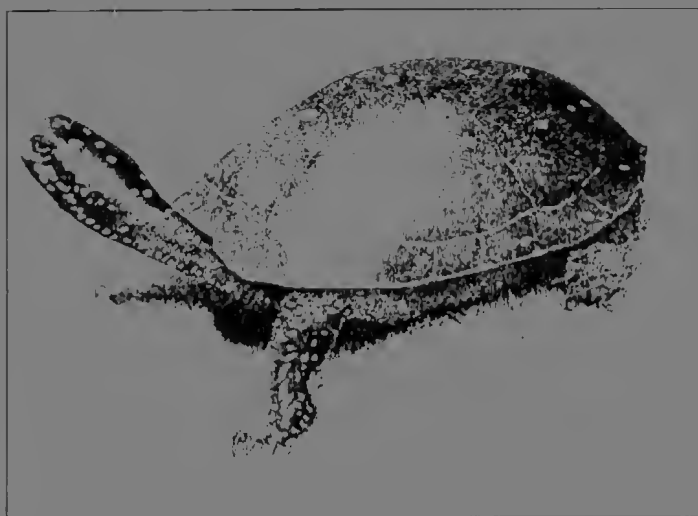


VOLUME 38 NUMBER 3 PAGES 117-156 JULY - SEPTEMBER 2004

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TRAIL & LANDSCAPE



*A Publication Concerned With
Natural History and Conservation*

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Publication Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

— Founded 1879 —

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Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse the information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, a quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a quarterly providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on Club activities.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for local members; see "Coming Events" in this issue.

Membership Fees: Individual (yearly) \$28 Sustaining (yearly) \$30
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Benefactor \$500 Subscriptions to Trail & Landscape:
(libraries and institutions): \$28 per year (volume)

Postage for U.S. and other foreign countries please add \$5

Single copies of recent issues: \$6 each postpaid

Index to Vols. 1 - 20: \$10 postpaid; to Vols. 21-25 \$5 postpaid.

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TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

Published by
The Ottawa Field-Naturalist' Club
Box 35069, Westgate P.O., Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 1A2

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Welcome New Members

Ottawa Area

Sue Allan
Yvonne & Gadi Avishai
Diane Buck
Mark Davidson & family
Dan Deslauriers
Howard & Joan Edel
Johanna Fagan
Frances Gertsch
Elizabeth Hadwen
Annette Jones
Nadia Karmali & family
Peter & Sherrene Kevan
Agnes Lougheed & family
Leonard Mader
Julie Mulligan
Jennifer O'Connor
Monique Potvin
Jaqueline Tokarew
Robert White
Dawn Wilson

Other Areas

Scott Bellows, Hampton Virginia
Dolf Dejong, Presquil'Ile ON

Dave Smythe
Membership Committee
May, 2004

Conservation Matters

Christine Hanrahan

The last 'Conservation Matters' report was written in November, 2000 (Rosenbaum 2001). However, our silence since then does not indicate a lack of things to report, but rather a lack of time to deal with issues and prepare quarterly updates. Nonetheless, we feel it is important for Club members to know about the issues their Conservation Committee (CC) works on, so we are once again initiating quarterly reports.

It would be impossible to catch up on the myriad issues we've dealt with in the last four years. Instead, this first contribution will look at committee work we are currently involved with.

5309 Bank Street

Formerly known as the South Gloucester Conservation Area, this site was on the radar of the Conservation Committee in the 1970s, when it fell under the previous Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. Albert Dugal compiled an extensive plant list over the years and prepared a chart showing the floristic richness of this site compared to another well-known biologically rich area, Stony Swamp. Last year we asked the city not to sell this site at 5309 Bank because of its ecological importance which has been well documented as noted above. Unfortunately, the site was sold, albeit with the promise that a full and proper environmental assessment would be performed before any changes were made to the area. In early March, notice was received from city planning of an application to change the zoning from "Agricultural" to "Resource extraction" (limestone quarrying). The city planner, when contacted, provided a copy of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the Level 2 mitigation plan for the site. The EIS is missing most of the species documented by professional botanists. For example, it does not include grasses or sedges, and has mis-classified many of the plants it did identify. A full and proper assessment needs to be done. And since a number of species on the COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Species In Canada) list have been identified there, this would be a test of the new Species at Risk Act (SARA).

Alfred Bog

Frank Pope reported on Meeting No. 27 of the core group of the Alfred Bog Committee that he, as Chair, convened on March 29, 2004. In addition to OFNC, its members represent South Nation Conservation (SNC), Vankleek Hill Nature Society

(VH), Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Ontario Parks (OP), and Nature Conservancy of Canada. The last meeting, No. 26, was held on October 14, 1999. Since there had been no call for another meeting, it was thought the committee might decide to disband. However, there is strong support for keeping the committee going. Further meetings are now scheduled for June 7 and October of this year. The stalled OMB hearings are due to resume in September. For more information on Alfred Bog see: <http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation/alfredbog/index.html>.

Britannia-Mud Lake Proposed Trail System

The National Capital Commission proposed a new path around Mud Lake and held an open house in January 2004 to discuss the results of their study. Members of both the Conservation and the Birds Committees attended. The CC, despite some earlier reservations, eventually endorsed the path reconstruction. Our initial concerns were that the new path would be too wide, paved (making it more like a road than a footpath), and would open up too much of the area to visitors and subsequently disturb wildlife. On the other hand, we realized that portions of the area were severely degraded by uncontrolled foot and bicycle traffic. We recognize that the NCC wants to enhance viewing opportunities here while at the same time protecting the site from further damage and as long as the plan presented at the open house is adhered to, we see no reason not to support it. We certainly do not endorse intensive tourist promotion of the area as a destination for birders, because this small natural area could easily be damaged by overuse. We also recommend discreet interpretive signs, no built facilities and monitoring of the site's flora.

Larose Forest

A group known as Francoscenie Inc., applied to have 353 acres of Larose Forest rezoned to allow the development of a theatrical extravaganza, *L'écho d'un peuple*. The Friends of Larose Forest appealed this to the OMB in 2003. The hearing was set for the first two weeks in December but ran out of time and was continued in February and again in March, 2004. The OFNC was a participant at the hearing, represented by Stan Rosenbaum who appeared before the hearing on 17 February, 2004. As of this writing, no decision has been reached and we are still awaiting the outcome of the OMB hearing. For more information on the Larose Forest issue, please refer to the following website:

www.ofnc.ca/conservation/larose/laroseforest.html and the article on the forest in Jan-Mar 2004 issue of *T&L*.

Marlborough Forest

A reconstituted working group, sponsored by the Ottawa Forests and Greenspace Advisory Committee, is to be called the Marlborough Forest Citizen's Group. The OFNC will most likely have a representative on this committee as they have done in the past, in other incarnations of a similar group. At present we are not actively involved with this issue, although that could change in the future.

Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study (UNAEES)

The UNAEES was set up in 2003 to look at natural areas within the urban boundary as part of the larger Greenspace Master Plan. Adrienne Sinclair is our representative on the committee. Several open houses have been held and a draft list of 186 sites has been released and is posted on the OFNC website:

http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation/UNAs/UNAEES_site_summary.html. Also released is the draft evaluation criteria which will be used to rank the sites. The CC decided that a database to keep track of the natural areas listed above would be a useful tool. Web visitors would be invited to contribute information and opinions to the database via data entry panels. Assigned members would review this supplemental information before adding it to the main database. Links set up will make data collection and the database available from both the GA (Greenspace Alliance) and the OFNC websites. At present, the city plans to have the environmental ratings of each site ready by July or early August.

Acknowledgements

The report was prepared using material submitted by various Conservation Committee members.

Please check the Conservation Pages on the OFNC web site for more information and updates:

<http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation>.

References

Rosenbaum, Stan. 2001. Conservation Matters. *T&L* 35(1): 5-7.

Lyme Disease Alert

Pearl Peterkin

I'm going to take Lyme disease a lot more seriously from now on.

Field naturalists have heard warnings about Lyme disease for 15 or 20 years now. The causal organism is *Borrelia burgdorferi* which is transmitted to humans by the bite of a deer tick (blacklegged tick; *Ixodes scapularis*). The disease has a wide range of serious symptoms that can include heart and/or neurological problems, and arthritis. Most patients do not recall being bitten, nor do they find the tick at the time of the bite. The blacklegged tick needs a meal of mammalian blood at the larval (pinhead-sized), nymph (1 mm), and adult (2 mm) stages. If the tick is infected, it transmits the infection at the time of the bite. Ticks are found in grassy and bushy areas. In the bush, to guard against tick bites, you should wear a hat, long-sleeved shirt, and long pants with the pant legs tucked into socks and taped. Apply an insect repellent (20-30% DEET) to clothing and skin. Before going indoors, brush off your clothing, and once inside, remove all clothing, check for ticks, and wash the clothes right away.

A surveillance program for blacklegged ticks that has been carried out by the Lyme Disease Association of Ontario since the mid-1980s, shows that an increasing number of ticks are now infected with *B. burgdorferi*, especially since 1999. Infected ticks have been found in the Ottawa and Kingston areas, Rondeau Provincial Park, Point Pelee National Park, and Long Point, among other areas.

If you do find an attached tick, remove it promptly as there is then less chance of infection. Using fine-point tweezers, grasp the tick where its mouthparts enter the skin and tug gently, until the tick releases its hold by withdrawing its barbed mouthparts from the skin. Be patient—proper tick removal will take time. Then wipe the bite area with antiseptic, such as alcohol, or wash with soap. Save the tick in a jar and take to a City or Provincial lab, or to your doctor, to be identified.

Diagnosis of Lyme disease is difficult. A circular red rash can develop around the bite early in the disease, but is present only 50% of the time. At present, some tests for Lyme disease are not reliable. The symptoms develop slowly over a period of years, and can be difficult to differentiate from other conditions that give similar symptoms. Once diagnosed, the disease is treatable.

My niece, who does canoe trips and hikes in Ontario, started showing neurological symptoms over 3 years ago. After many doctors' appointments and tests while her condition continued to deteriorate, and incurable neurological diseases were considered, she finally had the more accurate test for Lyme disease, and was found to have the disease. And I now realize that Lyme disease needs to be taken seriously by people who spend time in the outdoors.

Resources for the Study of Odonata in Canada

Biological Survey of Canada

The popularity of dragonfly studies has greatly increased over the last 10 years. Many books and internet sites are now available to assist amateurs and professionals. A report by Dr. Robert Cannings in the spring issue of the *Newsletter of the Biological Survey of Canada (Terrestrial Arthropods)* lists some of the most important resources for the study of Odonata in Canada. The article can be found on the Survey website at: http://www.biology.ualberta.ca/bsc/news23_1/odonata.htm.

Dr. Robert A. Cannings is Curator of Entomology at the Royal British Columbia Museum. He has studied dragonflies for 30 years and is the author of many popular and technical publications on these insects.

The Biological Survey of Canada (Terrestrial Arthropods) helps to coordinate scientific research among specialists on the Canadian fauna of insects, mites, and their relatives. It is a joint project of the Canadian Museum of Nature and the Entomological Society of Canada. For more information on the Survey and its projects see our website.

A Polypore at its Northern Limit in the Ottawa Region

Otto Loesel

It is well known by biologists and naturalists that the Eardly escarpment is the northern limit for the distribution of certain plants and animals due mainly to climatic conditions. This microclimate also allows the proliferation of interesting mushrooms and fungi. This may also be true for the distribution of certain polypores because of their saprophytic or parasitic relationship with certain trees.

At the end of August 2003, with my Land Access Permit for the Gatineau Park issued by the National Capital Commission (NCC), I came across an unusual polypore with an elongate to labyrinthiform pore pattern growing on a blown down poplar snag (*Populus grandidentata* Michx). This polypore species was unknown to me and could not be found in my modest reference library. Fortunately this find was three days before the annual Foray of the North American Mycological Association in Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures in Québec in which I participated. There, I submitted the polypore for identification to Bruno Boulet—well known mycologist, polypore specialist, and author of the “Les champignons des arbres de l’est de l’Amérique du Nord” (Boulet 2003).

The specimen was identified as *Trametes elegans* (Spengel:Fries) Fries, a species found on different continents with occasional to common occurrence in southern areas. The National Herbarium of Mycology (DAOM) in Ottawa contains two Canadian records: one from St. Thomas, ON (1994) identified by Dr. Jim Ginns; the second from Aylmer, QC (2000) collected and identified by Serge Audet.

Yves Lamoureux, curator of the Herbarium of the Cercle des mycologues de Montréal (CMM), was interested in this specimen, so it was gladly donated to the CMM Herbarium.

A brief description (translated by Dr. Yolande Dalpé) extracted from Boulet B. (2003) is:

Trametes elegans (Spengel:Fries)Fries

Basidiocarp: annual, made of 2 to 5 overlapping caps, laterally joined and strongly adherent to tree bark; without stem or dimidiate, semi-circular, slightly inflated when seen under radial view; upper surface flat, bumpy, uneven or embossed at the margin, tomentose, whitish or grayish, turning to silver gray, 1-6 cm when viewed from the top, 2-10 cm in width and 1-3 cm in thickness; cap margin straight and circular, thin, smooth surface, slightly lobate with age, pale brown, darker than the rest of the cap.

Flesh: whitish, fibrous, coriaceous and flexible-rubbery.

Pores: 2-4 mm in depth, round to angular, white becoming creamy colour to pale yellow, 1 to 2 per mm; hymenium highly variable, poroid, maze-like, in some degree gill-like, decurrent at proximity of the wood substrate.

Odour: acidulous, pleasant, agreeable and fleeting

Taste: mild

Edibility: non edible

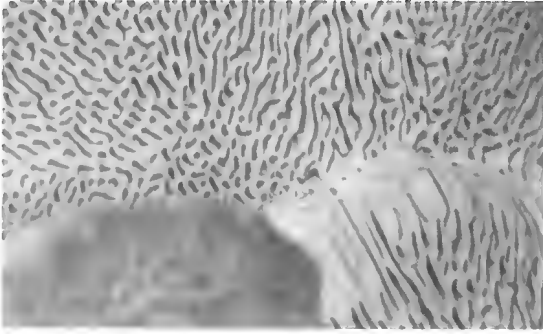
Tree associations: poplar snags

Mode of life: mainly saprophytic, may be parasitic causing a white rot.



Collected O. Lesel Photo R. Jorna

Trametes elegans. Photo by R. Jorna.



Pore Structure. Photo by R. Jorna

What a surprise towards the end of September when another specimen was discovered in a different location. This time on a poplar snag in the NCC Greenbelt from which fruiting bodies was collected and photographed by Rosemary Jorna, a nature photographer and a fellow OFNC member. Bruno Boulet again confirmed the identification and deposited the specimen in the Herbarium Louis-Marie of Laval University.

Why this polypore has not been collected or documented more frequently in Southern or Eastern Ontario remains a puzzle to me. There are and have been dedicated mycologists in the region, so it is difficult to believe that it could have been overlooked. Has this fungi extended its range northward during the last 10-20 years? This remains unknown but it would be interesting to hear from anyone who knows of any documented records of *Trametes elegans* in eastern Canada.

P.S. Canadian polypore specialists agreed recently that *Trametes elegans* should be transferred to the genus *Lenzites*, therefore becoming *Lenzites elegans*. This reclassification is supported by the elongate to labyrinthiforme (gill-like) pore surface which was recently confirmed by recent molecular genetic analyses (Bérubé J, Centre de Foresterie des Laurentides, unpublished results)

References

Boulet, Bruno. 2003. Les champignons des arbres de l'est de l'Amérique du Nord. Les Publications du Québec.

I would like to thank Dr. Yolande Dalpé, who kindly read the manuscript and for her helpful suggestions.

GPS, UTM, NAD27, and WGS

Sandy Garland

Well, yes, the workshop on global positioning systems (GPSs) was a bit technical, but we all learned a lot about those nifty little gadgets that have been popping up in the hands of scientists, birders, technophiles, and toy lovers.

At an OFNC workshop held at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden last spring, Fred Schueler explained GPS for naturalists. Think about it, on the way back from Toronto, Fred and Aleta captured data points for *Phragmites australis* along the 401 and mapped leopard frog migration on the secondary highway, all from the comfort of their car. And the locations are far more accurate than they would have been using a detailed topographical map.

Since 1957, a group of satellites has been orbiting the earth. Hand-held GPS devices, which are now smaller than a cell phone, communicate with those satellites, perform a series of triangulations and tell you your longitude and latitude in a matter of nanoseconds. Pushing a button stores your current position in the device's memory, so you can find it later, record it, tell your friends about it, and map it on your computer.

If it is so easy, why hold a workshop? Partly because GPS units have to be calibrated. Fred took us through basic navigation—latitude and longitude—then explained the universal transverse mercator grid, an international mapping standard. If the earth were a perfect sphere, the workshop would have ended there. Unfortunately, it's not, so "datums" have to be established for various regions. The North American datum of 1927 (NAD27), which is still in use, is a standard that is adjusted for the shape of the globe on our continent and also includes average sea level, so you can measure elevation. It's being replaced by NAD83 (a newer standard), so you have to check the fine print on your topographical map to see which one it is based on.

To complicate matters, the default setting for GPS devices is WGS84. So if you find your GPS is "off," check to see if its setting matches the map you are using.

Since the workshop, I have noticed this terminology everywhere. At a recent stream sampling workshop, half a dozen people pulled out GPS units and set waypoints. Bev Wigney, who sends us amazing photos on the Nature Listserv, always quotes latitude, longitude, UTM, etc. And the most popular use of GPS units in North America? Finding your car in a shopping mall parking lot! Don't you wish you had attended the workshop?

Eastern Tailed Blue Overwinters

Linda Jeays

I am pleased to report, for the third consecutive year, good news concerning the Eastern Tailed Blue (*Cupido comyntas*), a butterfly considered rare in the Ottawa area (within a 50 km radius of the Peace Tower).

A new Ottawa record was set in 2003 when I found Eastern Tailed Blue at precisely the same Eagleson Road location for the third year in succession. In addition, I documented a second successive year at a Richmond site, and again found the Blue at a site I reported in 2001 (*T&L* 36:3, 37:3). Also, other Ottawa area naturalists now have observations at repeat locations (see Notes).

Season

Poor weather and ill health restricted me to four butterfly expeditions in June 2003, and I did not find the first Eastern Tailed Blue until July 9. I saw the last one September 17.

All available Ottawa area records for the Blue (1974-2003) show the butterfly from June 6 (but there are only four June records) to September 29. There are significantly more sightings in September than in July. Peak season appears to be August 16-31. On August 18, 2003, I saw a female apparently laying eggs among alfalfa.

The Blue can be difficult to find in prime habitats and at known locations even when the weather is perfect and the season appropriate. At Location 3, for example, successful searches were on July 9, 14, 25, 31; Aug 8, 18; Sept 6. Unsuccessful searches occurred on July 10, 19, 22 and August 12, 14, 21, and 26.

I was able to track down only seven records for 1974-1998. The first significant number of records for the Blue in one year is in 1999, when OFNC members reported the butterfly at six different locations.

Eastern Tailed Blue has been reported in the Ottawa area throughout June, July, August and September. The following diagrams divide the months into 6 segments (day 1-5, day 6-10, etc.) and show when the Blue was reported.

Personal Observations 2003:

June					July					August					September				
						x	x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x		x	

Cumulative Observations 1974-2003:

June					July					August					September				
	x	x			x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Numbers

In 2003, I saw Eastern Tailed Blue 47 times, probably 46 individuals. There were 33 males, 12 females, 1 sex unknown. Thirty Blues were positively differentiated by marking the hindwings. Sex, lifespan and location indicated that the others were likely separate individuals.

On August 8, I relocated a male which was marked on July 25, indicating a minimum 15-day lifespan.

I saw a maximum of six Blues at a time at one site. This was at Location 1 on September 6. The maximum number seen on one day was eight, over three locations, also on September 6.

Territory

In August 2003, acting on a timely suggestion from Ross Layberry, I used acquired knowledge of habitat to search for the Blue outwards from known locations. The result was five totally new sites. In addition, at three sites (two previously known; one new) Eastern Tailed Blue had spread to nearby suitable habitats, apparently down field edges and roadside ditches.

My main search area was within a few kilometres either side of a line drawn between Bells Corners, Fallowfield, Richmond and Munster: the south-west quadrant of the Ottawa area. Much of this region is rich farmland with plenty of *Leguminosae* (host plants) as both crops and weeds.

Habitat

In 2003, the Blue appeared in a wide variety of habitats including open weedy fields, field edges sheltered by trees or woods, a flat granite rock in a beaver pond and a suburban park. Waiting at the corner of a field of Red Clover, or an expanse of Alsike Clover, proved the best bet for finding Eastern Tailed Blue. Easily accessible roadside habitats included the neglected long-grass/wildflower/sandy or gravel

entrances of cultivated fields with sheltering shrubs and small trees. I had most success on hot afternoons and sometimes saw males puddling at damp tire-track ruts.

In 2003, I observed the butterfly in strict association (nectaring or laying eggs) with the following plants: Alsike Clover (*Trifolium hybridum*), Birdfoot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*), and Cow Vetch (*Vicia cracca*).

Although the Blue was to be found in fields of Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*), I observed activity only in association with the other listed plants, which were growing among the Red Clover crop. In the alfalfa field on September 6, the butterfly was faithful to the same few square metres of territory even though the crop had been harvested and mown flat.

Sightings

Table 1 summarizes my sightings for the Eastern Tailed Blue in 2003.

- Note that the Twin Elm site, near Richmond, is the same as "Location 1" in previous *T&L* articles (36:3, 37:3). Sightings at this location in 2001 were in area a). In 2003, Blues were in two new areas: area b) was about 250 metres from area a) and c) was about 200 metres from b). It should be mentioned that at Twin Elm location b) collectors took four Eastern Tailed Blue (See Notes).
- The Eagleson Road Site, near Richmond, is the same as "Location 2" in previous *T&L* articles (36:3,37:3) and was the third successive year for the Blues at this location. Here, areas a) and b) are about 150 metres apart, while c) is about 150 metres from b).
- The Richmond location is its second successive year (see Notes).
- The Moodie Drive location has two sites on opposite sides of the road, about 500 metres apart.

Table 1. Eastern Tailed Blue: Specific Habitats and Seasonal Data.

Location	Area	Habitat	Date	Number
Twin Elm	a)	Wet meadow	Aug 23; Sept 6, 17	1-3 per time, 7 sightings
	b)	Cornfield corner with Alsike Clover/woodlot edge	Aug 18, 19, 23; Sept 6	1-3 per time, 10 sightings
	c)	Corner of soybean field	Aug 25	1
Eagleson	a)	Alfalfa/hay field with Alsike Clover	Aug 18; Sept 9	1-2 per time, 3 sightings
	b)	Alfalfa/hay field with Alsike Clover	Aug 23; Sept 6, 9	1 per time, 3 sightings
	c)	Sandy track with Alsike Clover	Aug 21; Sept 9	1-3 per time, 5 sightings
Richmond		Deep, wide grassy ditch bordered by banks of Cow Vetch	July 9, 14, 25, 31; Aug 8, 18; Sept 6	1-3 per time, 10 sightings
Moodie Drive	a)	Field corner with Alsike Clover	Aug 25	1
	b)	Grassy track with Birdfoot Trefoil	Aug 25	2
Twin Elm		Field of Red Clover	Aug 25	2
Bells Corners		Suburban park with White Clover throughout	Aug 19	1
Fallowfield Road		Corner of Red Clover field	Aug 26	1
Munster		Corner of Red Clover field	Sept 16	1

Commentary

The status of Eastern Tailed Blue in the Ottawa area has changed significantly in recent years.

Prior to 1998, there were very few sightings. For example, Ross Layberry saw the Blue only twice in his first 32 years of collecting and, despite persistent attempts, the sightings could not be repeated.

Since 1998, Ross and other observers have seen numbers of Blues sufficient to show that breeding has occurred, and there have been reports from at least 25 locations (including those in this article).

The work documented above, and in two previous issues of *T&L*, is acknowledged by Ross Layberry to prove conclusively that not only breeding but overwintering of Eastern Tailed Blue has occurred in at least two sites in the Ottawa area.

Notes

- The 2002 sighting at Location 3 was by Tom Hanrahan.
- In 2003, Tom Hanrahan and Peter Hall also saw Eastern Tailed Blues at their previously known locations: Hanrahan in successive years, 2002 and 2003 at Location 3; Hall within 100 metres of a 1998 Mer Bleue location, and within three metres of a 1999 Manion Corners location.
- Diane Lepage and Simon Rainville saw five Blues at Location 5 on August 23, 2003 and collected three. Rainville returned August 31, saw 12, and collected one.
- David Allison, Peter Hall, Tom Hanrahan, Ross Layberry and Michael Olsen also reported sightings of the Blue in 2003 for locations near Bells Corners, Kanata, Manion Corners, Fitzroy Harbour, Dwyer Hill Road, Mer Bleue and Kemptville. Of their nine sightings, eight were single individuals, one comprised four Blues.

OFNC members are respectfully encouraged to visit their previously known locations for Eastern Tailed Blue in 2004.

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- Jeays, Linda. 2002. Sightings of Eastern Tailed Blue and Common Buckeye. *T&L* 36(3): 106-109.
- Jeays, Linda. 2003. Did Eastern Tailed Blue and/or Common Buckeye Overwinter? *T&L* 37(3): 112-116.
- Layberry, Ross A. Personal communication. March 17, 2004.

News from the FWG: Spring 2004

Christine Hanrahan

As surely as the swallows return to Capistrano each spring, so too do volunteers to the Fletcher Wildlife Garden (FWG). Sometime in April, depending on the weather, the Backyard Garden (BYG) crew reunite at the garden, roll up their sleeves and get to work: a sign of spring as optimistic and as enduring as returning birds and emerging vegetation.

This year, the BYG volunteers will have lots of work to consider as Jay Ladell, BYG Manager, begins to implement his exciting vision for the garden (Hanrahan 2004). Some of the features such as the wetland component will be several years in the making, but others require smaller changes. Contours of the garden will change somewhat with larger beds and smaller areas of grass. Because we want to demonstrate the use of native plants most of the non-native ones will be gradually replaced by native flora. However, a small bed will be devoted to wildlife-friendly non-native plants.

The current interest in native plant gardening by the general public is encouraging, even if it sometimes seems more like a trend (the latest 'must-have' in garden design) and therefore temporary rather than a conversion in thinking about how our choice of garden plants impacts native flora. But the interest in growing native plants is nothing new. In 1910, William T.

W.T. Macoun's call to 'go native'!

In words that could have been penned today, Macoun calls for city streets and public places to be planted with native trees and suggests people look at native flora when creating gardens. He extolls the beauties of butterfly weed, trilliums, wild phlox, Virginia cowslip, cardinal flower and others and laments the spread of so many introduced species, noting that "practically all our bad weeds are European plants" (Macoun 1910). He bristles at naming the European thistle *Cirsium arvense*, Canada thistle, and says we "should protest against its being called under that name." (Macoun 1910). I can't help wondering what he'd say if he could see today the extent to which so many exotic plants have obliterated our native vegetation.

Macoun was encouraging gardeners to 'plant Canadian' and make full use of native vegetation, particularly our wildflowers which he called "among the best in fact available anywhere." To get an idea of how attractive our native wildflowers are and how they can be used in a garden context, visit the BYG in the different seasons for the full spectrum of nature's bounty and enjoy!

Events

FWG participated in two big events this spring. From April 2-4 we joined the Ottawa Wildlife Festival's 'Wildlife Awareness Event' at Carlingwood Mall. This has now become a staple in the FWG calendar and offers good publicity for the garden. Many visitors to our booth expressed interest in volunteering. Others came seeking advice on gardening for wildlife. This year there was a greater than usual interest in bat houses and creating hedgerows. Our information sheets on these topics went quickly, along with those on native flora for sunny and shady areas. New to us, but with the potential for becoming a regular event, was the Ottawa Home and Garden Show which ran March 25 through March 28. Since I sit on the Wildlife Festival Committee representing the OFNC/FWG, I organized our participation in that event. However, Jay Ladell was the driving force behind our contribution to the Home and Garden Show. A lot of work and much time spent at Lansdowne Park for Jay, but worth it in the end because close to 30 interested people signed up as potential volunteers, 1500 pamphlets highlighting the FWG and the plant sale were distributed. Our partner at the show, the Canadian Wildlife Federation, contributed their portion of donations received, for a total of \$300 for the FWG. To all the volunteers who helped with both events, and to Gretchen Denton who organized them so capably, a heartfelt thank you!

By the time this issue is in your hands we will have held our annual International Migratory Bird Day event (May 8), our Plant Sale (June 5), and participated in the Health Canada Environment Week fair at Tunneys Pasture (June 2). Anne Coffey of the Canadian Biodiversity Institute and passionate advocate for schoolyard greening, will be holding a workshop on this topic under the auspices of FWG at the garden on May 23. Reports on these activities will be in the next update. Stay tuned.

Volunteer Opportunities

The usual volunteer opportunities at FWG will continue this spring through fall with one new addition. Our schedule is:

- *Friday morning*: regular work in the BYG takes place.
- *Sunday morning*: volunteers work primarily in the rest of the garden, planting, weeding invasives, and helping with other tasks as required.
- *Sunday afternoon*: During summer months the Interpretive Centre is staffed by volunteers usually from noon to 4:00 p.m.
- *Wednesday evening*: This is a new volunteer group organized by Jay to do more of the heavy landscaping work in the BYG as well as other tasks as they arise.

We're also looking for volunteers for other projects. We're especially anxious to get Habitat Managers for the New Woodlot, the Pond, and the Hedgerow. If anyone feels they have the necessary interest and knowledge to help with this, we'd love to hear from you. More volunteer options exist and can be found by contacting the FWG (details at end of article).

Volunteer Orientation Sessions

In the past, new volunteers were given individual mini-information sessions. This is time consuming and not always satisfying for either the FWG committee or the new volunteers. To remedy this we developed 'Volunteer Orientation Sessions' which will be given as needed to groups of new volunteers before they begin working with us. The sessions will consist primarily of information about the FWG: how we operate, when the volunteer work takes place, who coordinates the various tasks and an overview of safety and liability issues.

Safety

In order to ensure that everyone who works at FWG does so in a safe environment, we have produced a set of safety guidelines developed by FWG Committee member Diane Lepage. They will be posted near the door of the centre. Volunteers will also be required to sign waiver forms.

Visitors

Aside from dog-walkers who are perhaps the most regular of visitors to the garden, I've noticed quite an increase in birders around the site. Ten years ago when I started my bird counts there it was rare to see another birder, but in the last few years they are encountered on almost every visit. We must be doing something right if our site is becoming known as a decent urban spot to find birds. Even a visitor from southern Ontario knew of the FWG's reputation as a birding location and was paying a visit before returning home.

On the few really warm days we had this spring, visitors to the garden increased exponentially. One day while trying to leave the centre, I was waylaid at least half a dozen times by various folk seeking information about the garden. Another day, I was approached by a woman who wanted to express her joy at having this wonderful oasis to retreat to. We've always attracted many photographers, particularly to the BYG when it is in its full summer glory, but increasingly I see photographers in all seasons and in all sections of the garden. One fellow said he regularly visited and was far more interested in the 'wilder' areas of the FWG because they offered subjects of greater interest to him.

Signs

Two new signs have been erected at FWG. One, on the road in just past the first

building, directs visitors to the Interpretive Centre and the Backyard Garden. The second, on the north side of the pond, points out the trail. Both of these great looking signs are the work of Charlie Clifford.

Plants and Animals

Birds

Not surprisingly most bird activity in the coldest weather centred on the two feeders, in the BYG and south of the Ash Woods. When I wrote the last update (late January 2004) I was still wondering if we'd see the large flocks of House Finches and House Sparrows of previous winters, but they never materialized. On our best days there were fewer than a dozen finches and not much more than 20-25 House Sparrows at any time.



Black-capped Chickadee. Photo by Gwen Williams

A Northern Shrike was found on at least four separate occasions, while a Great Horned Owl was seen only once, unlike last winter when one stayed around for nearly five months. A Red-tailed Hawk was seen during February, and the Cooper's Hawk, visible all winter, is now seemingly part of a pair, or at least, two have been seen together around the garden—a male and a female. Bohemian Waxwings came and went, with the biggest flock, over 150 birds, found on April 10 near the Centre.

FWG participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count in mid-February, but birds were scarce and we had fewer than 10 species. Still, it was fun and is becoming a regular activity for us.

By March 8, male Red-winged Blackbirds were back in the garden, joined a month later on April 8 by the first females. Migrants continued trickling into the FWG throughout March and April including Eastern Phoebes, American Robins, Killdeer, Song Sparrows, grackles, cowbirds, Chipping Sparrows, Hermith Thrush, Northern

Flickers and both kinglet species. A pair of American Kestrels returned to FWG in early March and began checking out the nest box on the barn but after a short while seemed to lose interest and by mid-April a European Starling was noticed carrying nesting material into the box. The kestrels haven't been seen as frequently as in previous years, however, they may yet decide to nest there again. Dark-eyed Juncos, around the farm in small flocks all winter, were joined by Tree Sparrows and Fox Sparrows at the FWG. Tree Swallows arrived April 12 filling the garden with their twittering song, and by the end of the month were already claiming nest boxes. A pair of Green Herons was already checking out their nest site by May 1.

Nesting Birds

Looking at the aerial shot of FWG I'm always amazed at how tiny the site looks, but it is plain to see why it is such an oasis for wildlife. As the site matures more species and greater numbers of birds are nesting here, with 26 species recorded to date. We suspect breeding for three more species but haven't yet found evidence. Not surprisingly, the number of Tree Swallows at FWG has increased as more nest boxes are erected. This year we'll probably put up at least another six, some in a new location above the ravine.



Aerial view of FWG, fall 1998. Photo by Cedrine Huemer.

Nesting birds have been well documented on the Central Experimental Farm, on which FWG is located. In 1897, W.T. Macoun noted that there were "twenty or

more species breeding" on the farm, including Eastern Meadowlarks, Bobolinks and Vesper Sparrows. In 1903 he published an account of nesting birds on the farm which included in addition to the above, Least Bittern, Sora Rail, Spotted Sandpiper, Black-billed Cuckoo, Nighthawk, Purple Finch and Eastern Bluebirds, none of which now nest on the property. Even more intriguing is discovering that many of the species Macoun considered common nesters at the farm over 100 years ago are still common today at FWG. Of course, the farm has changed considerably since Macoun's time. Gone are the apple orchards, meadows and wetlands to which he refers (Macoun 1903). And yet, in some small way, the FWG is perhaps now replicating some of those areas. We have open weedy areas (the Old Field), a small wetland (the Pond with its cattails), and the crabapples planted long before we came to the site, are like a small orchard. The more things change. . . ?

Other Fauna

By mid-March groundhogs and chipmunks had re-emerged. As the snow melted, extensive caches of mostly Norway Spruce cones were revealed, particularly in the conifers along the north edge of the Ash Woods. There is no doubt the Red Squirrels ate well this winter! We saw far fewer signs of Red Fox but perhaps they have learned to be more cautious with all the dogs around.

FWG Details and Contact Information

The FWG is located off Prince of Wales Drive on the Central Experimental Farm. For more information please visit the website at: <http://www.ofnc.ca/fletcher.php>. There you can sign up for our free quarterly newsletter *What's Up at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden*, available electronically. Brochures about the garden are available from the kiosk in front of the centre or from inside on Friday mornings from spring through fall, Sunday afternoons in the summer, or during the week June through August when we have a summer employee.

- FWG phone number: 613-234-6767
- David Hobden, Chair, FWG Management Committee: hobdend@achilles.net
- Jay Ladell, BYG Manager: jay_ladell@yahoo.com
- Sandy Garland: Newsletter, information about the FWG: sgarland@magma.ca
- Christine Hanrahan: bird and wildlife observations: vanessa@magma.ca.

The first butterfly of the season was a Milbert's Tortoiseshell on March 30. A week later, an Eastern Comma was found on the south side of the Ash Woods, and a Mourning Cloak on April 16. As the days warmed up, more Mourning Cloaks and various other insects were increasingly found. On April 15 the first Wood Frogs

were heard. Spring is underway!

Acknowledgments: As always, grateful thanks to the many volunteers without whom the garden would be a very different place. Thanks also to Gwen Williams and Cendrine Huemer for their excellent photos.

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Annual Ottawa-Gatineau Fall Bird Count

Chris Lewis

This year's Fall Bird Count will take place from 3:00 p.m. **Saturday October 16** until 3:00 p.m. **Sunday October 17**. The count covers the entire Ottawa-Gatineau birding area (a 50 km radius from the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill). The main objective is to have fun and to discover what birds are out there in the fall in our region, as well as provide an opportunity to practice your bird counting skills. You don't have to be an expert to participate and you don't have to be out all day and night for 24 hours, but you do have a great post-count compilation and dinner to look forward to on the Sunday evening (free of charge for all participants)!

For those interested in counting birds on the Ontario side, please contact Eve Ticknor at 737-7551 or by e-mail at sandbird@magma.ca. To bird on the Québec side, you may contact Daniel St-Hilaire at 776-0860.

Gyrfalcon Colour Variation

Ian Flann

A literature survey dealing with Gyrfalcons (*Falco rusticolus*) reveals that references to the various Gyrfalcon colour variants as "morphs" is becoming more common (e.g. Sibley 2000). Such references often make the assumption that the three common Gyrfalcon colour groups are comparable to the true red and gray morphs of the Eastern Screech-Owl (*Otus asio*) and to the Blue and Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*) morphs. In my opinion, this is not correct.

Ford (1945) emphasized that morphs must first be phenotypically distinguishable with discontinuities in the phenotype. He also stated that polymorphism must not be used to include continuous or quasi-continuous variation.

Huxley (1955) proposed use of the term "morphism" to denote genetic polymorphism opposed to other kinds of polymorphism (e.g., seasonal, cyclic, geographic). He referred to Ford's definition of genetic polymorphism as the coexistence in one interbreeding population of two or more sharply distinct and genetically-determined forms. Further, Huxley pointed out that the least abundant form should be present in numbers too great to be due solely to recurrent mutation, and proposed that such forms be called "morphs." Huxley also suggested removal of the adjective "sharply" from the definition to accommodate rare cases of continuous polymorphism. He argued that in continuous morphisms, such as in the sea-plantain (*Plantago maritima*), there are no sharp discontinuities, and the excessive genetic variability constituting the continuous polymorphism is maintained by selection. He stressed the fact that every morphism must involve some balance of selective advantage and disadvantage, some underlying genetic basis, and that its discontinuities must be determined either genetically or developmentally.

The Gyrfalcon would be an example of continuous polymorphism if that were acceptable terminology. I suggest that the term "continuous polymorphism" is a contradiction that should be avoided.

It has been established for many years that Gyrfalcon colour variation extends in a continuum from white to almost black, although most birds are classed as either white, gray, or dark (Krabbe 1934; Plates III-VI). In a study of 205 specimens collected from European Russia across to eastern Siberia, Ellis et al. (1996) found the same continuum. They classified the birds as "colour variants," and found that

climate was a better predictor of colour than latitude; the area with the highest percentage of white birds was eastern Siberia.

Clum and Cade (1994) state that the stripe on white birds, when expressed, consists of a few dark streaks next to the shafts of the feathers, giving a kind of speckled appearance. Clum and Cade also asked "what level of plumage variation among *morphs* is justified?" This use of the term "morph" was an error (T. Cade pers. comm.).

In North America, there is a coarse progression in the ratio of light birds to dark birds from northeast to west; birds of northern Greenland and the eastern high arctic are usually white, those of the central arctic are usually 50:50 white:gray, and those in the Yukon and Alaska are mainly gray, a few dark. At Ungava Bay, however, "the whitest and blackest varieties breed together in the same area along with every kind of intermediate" and there are white birds in western Alaska (Cade 1960). In Eurasia there are no white birds in Fennoscandia and western Russia, but the occurrence of white birds increases eastward until they make up approximately 50% of the population in northeastern Siberia and Kamchatka (Cade et al. 1998).

In the Lower Kolyma, northeastern Siberia, pairs of white Gyrfalcons were limited to the maritime coastline with cliffs, whereas pairs of gray birds were limited to the timberline. The white Gyrfalcons were preying on ducks and waders, while the gray Gyrfalcons were eating grouse (*Lagopus* sp.). The hunting strategy of the two colour variants was also different (E. Potapov pers. comm.).

Because Gyrfalcons do not exhibit two or more distinct forms, the various Gyrfalcon colour variants are not morphs according to Huxley's definition. Why then do we see more and more references to Gyrfalcons as morphs in bird guides and scientific papers? The error stems from at least two sources. Huxley, apparently, was under the impression that all Gyrfalcons fell into one of three colour categories; therefore, he referred to them as morphs. Second, some authors have expanded the original definition of morph.

"Morph—term used for recognizably different forms of a species, usually colour related. Colour morphs are dark, rufous, and light." (Wheeler and Clark 1995).

Frank Beebe (pers. comm.) agrees that the concept of three Gyrfalcon morphs is misleading to some ornithologists and birdwatchers. For example, at some locations white Gyrfalcons have all-white tails, while at other locations they have conspicuously barred tails.

A few field guides refer to the white, gray, and dark phases of the Gyrfalcon. For some the term "phase" implies a change with time, and sometimes it refers to

synchronization; therefore, its use with reference to Gyrfalcons is not appropriate. It is akin to referring to blue phase Rock Doves (*Columba livida*).

What is the appropriate terminology for Gyrfalcons? Cade (pers. comm.) now prefers colour variants. Thomson (1964) suggested the term "form," and provided the following definition:

"Form, in taxonomy, a loose or deliberately neutral term for a species or subdivision thereof, non-committal as regards rank or status to be assigned to it."

This problem in semantics is best resolved by understanding the causes for the unusual colour variation. Cade (pers. comm.) hypothesized that the three broad colour groups are a result of geographic isolation in Pleistocene refugia during the past 100 000 years or so. He believes that the white birds evolved in isolation in the Ellesmere Island—north Greenland refugium. A melanistic form may have evolved in another return refugium around Labrador; while the original or ancestral gray gyrs were restricted to habitats south of the continental ice sheets in North America and Eurasia. When the ice retreated, the breeding ranges of the various forms merged and, because no reproductive isolating mechanisms had evolved, the three colour variants (originally geographic in origin), have freely interbred to produce the present distribution and range of variants we see in the Gyrfalcon's plumage.

In any case, it is clear that there is a colour continuum in Gyrfalcons, and not in Screech Owls, and that the term "morph" is being used for both patterns of morphological variation. I suggest the term "morph" is most appropriate for discontinuous variants and not the Gyrfalcon.

I would like to thank T. J. Cade for his assistance over the years, and E. Potapov and referees D. Bird, A. Jenkins and P. Koskumies for their helpful comments.

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This article was originally published in *The Journal of Raptor Research* (June 2003, 37(2):173-174).

Seedathon 2004

Chris Lewis

The OFNC annual Seedathon raises funds to purchase bird seed for the Club's feeders which are maintained by dedicated volunteers. On Sunday September 5, 2004 (tentative date), our team will hit the "trails & landscapes" of the 50 km (Ottawa-Gatineau area) to find as many bird species as we can within a 24-hour period.

We will be contacting previous sponsors, as well as try to drum up some new support, in the weeks preceding the event. Your past pledges have been very generous, and every little bit helps!

To all sponsors, past and future:

Pledges can be made as a flat amount, or an amount per species (for example \$10.00 flat...or...10 cents per species, which would total \$10.00 if we find 100 species). You may choose to e-mail a pledge to Chris Lewis at melanerpes_lewis@yahoo.ca. Please include your name, mailing address including postal code, and your phone # or e-mail address. This is all important information, in order for us to track and follow up on pledges, as well as send you an acknowledgement and a full report of our day. If you require a tax receipt, please indicate this as well.

For maps and directions to the OFNC feeders, visit the Club's web site and go to the birding page at www.ofnc.ca.

OFNC Bird Records Sub-committee Activities 2003

C.R. Bowen

The Bird Records Sub-committee is responsible for the integrity of the occurrence data maintained and disseminated by the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club. The Sub-committee actively solicits reports for this purpose. The Sub-committee decides which occurrences are sufficiently documented and merit being included in "A Birder's Checklist of Ottawa" which is published by the OFNC. The Sub-committee has recently prepared a reformatted "Field Checklist" for publication by the Club. This new "Field Checklist" is now available.

The Sub-committee encourages documentation of any sighting, within 50 km radius, (the Peace Tower being the centre point), of a bird species not in the 1993 edition of "A Birder's Checklist of Ottawa." Ken Allison has prepared an excellent article on pain-free preparation of reports. It is on the Club web-site at: <http://www.ofnc.ca/birding/rarebirds.html>. This link also provides a short list of rarer species, already on the Checklist, yet deserving documentation. Finally, documentation is desired for many out of season occurrences. If you have an observation that falls outside the distribution on the Checklist, please call 860-9000 and report it to the status line. This will ensure that someone will call you back and discuss your find with you.

The Sub-committee members for 2003 were:

Ken Allison - Chair
Colin Bowen - Recording Secretary
Bruce Di Labio
Mark Gawn
Robert Gorman
Paul Jones
Bernie Ladouceur
Christina Lewis
Gordon Pringle
Daniel St-Hilaire
Michael Tate
Chris Traynor

Brief Summation of Activities of Sub-committee for 2003

The Sub-committee held three meetings during 2003. The first was held in January to review the CBC data prior to release. The April and November meetings were held mainly to review Rare Bird Reports. Throughout this year two deferred reports from previous year and 32 new reports were reviewed. The results are listed below.

Reports are arranged by English and scientific names following the Seventh Edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (American Ornithologist's Union 1998) and its 44th supplement (American Ornithologists' Union 2003).

The Sub-committee has made every effort to verify documentation prior to acceptance and publication of a record but there are still possibilities of errors or omissions. The Sub-committee welcomes written communications which would either correct or reinforce any record. These can be forwarded to :

OFNC

Attention Bird Records Sub-Committee

PO Box 35069, Westgate P.O.

Ottawa, Ont.

K1Z-1A2

ACCEPTED REPORTS

These accepted reports include new reports as well deferred reports where new documentation or evidence is now available. Report Writer's Name(s) is underlined and *Finder's Name(s)* when known is in italics.

Northern Gannet

Morus bassanus

- 2001 - 8 October, Ottawa, Ottawa River, Des Chênes Rapids; Bob Bracken, Christina Lewis, *Bernie Ladouceur*, Michael Tate and Jan Slumkoski. Most reports of Northern Gannets for the Ottawa Area are in mid to late November.
- 2002 - 11 November, Ottawa, Ottawa River, Dick Bell Park; Philip Wright. Juvenile bird.

Ross's Goose

Chen rossii

- 1999 - 25 April, Québec, Pontiac Co., Eardley, Parker Road at Ottawa River; Gordon Pringle, *John Dubois*, Colin Bowen. Seen by many more birders.
- 2003 - 12 April, Ontario, Prescott-Russell, Borget, Cobb's Lake Creek; Bob Bracken, Christina Lewis, Paul Mirsky, Bev Scott. Two birds seen and both were adults.

Trumpeter Swan***Cygnus buccinator***

- 2002 - 01/02 May, Québec, Pontiac Co., Breckenridge, Sapinière Road (Flooded Area); Jean Dubois, André Cloutier, Donald Dallaire, Gary McNulty. Photos on file.
- 2003 - 25 April, Ontario, Prescott-Russell Co., North Russell, Frontier Road; Bob Bracken, Christina Lewis, Jim McCormick, Paul Mirski, Paul Schoening, Jan Slumkosli. Last time seen; April 26, 2003.

NOTE: The Trumpeter Swan is a reintroduced species and based on ABA's rules does not have "Official" status as of yet in this area. The BRSC reviews these reports in order to establish a historical record.

Eurasian Wigeon***Anas penelope***

- 2003 - 30 April, Québec, Gatineau Co., Masson-Anger; Donald Dallaire, André Cloutier, John Dubois, Gary McNulty. There were 2 male adult birds and were seen by many other observers. Last time seen; 03 May 2003.

Harlequin Duck***Histrionicus Histrionicus***

- 1999 - 19 December, Ottawa, Rapids between Strathcona Park and Rideau Tennis Club; Bob Bracken, Christina Lewis, Bruce Di Labio, Bernie Ladouceur and many others. This female bird remained in the area until at least 23 January 2000. Photos on file.
- 2003 - 21 April, Ottawa, Ottawa River, Rémic Rapids; Victor Loewen. Photo on file.

NOTE: There has been a female Harlequin present in the winter in the above areas since 1999. Dates observed are as follows:

- 19 December 1999 to 23 January 2000
 17 December 2000 to 22 April 2001
 20 November 2001 to End of March 2002
 22 November 2002 to 21 April 2003

Purple Gallinule***Porphyryla martinica***

- 2003 - 28 September, Ottawa, Shirleys Bay; John Walmsley, George Hollinworth. **Third Record for Ottawa District.** Immature bird. Photos on file.

American Avocet***Recurvirostra americana***

- 2003 - 29 September, Ontario, Prescott-Russell Co., Winchester Sewage Lagoon; Robert Gorman, Mark Gawn, Bob Cremak, Tom Hanrahan, Bernie Ladouceur, Rémy Poulin, Michael Tate, Chris

Traynor, Kim Zbitnew. Photos on file. Found on 28 September 2003 and last seen on 29 September 2003. **Second Record for Ottawa District.**

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

- 2003 - 10 May, Ontario, Prescott-Russell Co., Embrun Sewage Lagoon; Eve Ticknor. Photo on file.
- 11 May, Ontario, Prescott-Russell Co., Embrun Sewage Lagoon; Christina Lewis, Eve Ticknor, Colin Bowen, Patricia Bowen, Bob Bracken, Ron Curtis, Bruce Di Labio, Gary McNulty, Alicia McNulty, Langis Sirois, Chris Traynor and others. Photo on file.

Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus*

- 2003 - 25 January, Ottawa, Britannia; Christina Lewis, Bernie Ladouceur, Bob Bracken, Robert Cermak, Langis Sirois. Last time reported; 31 January 2003.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

- 2002 - 15 December, Ottawa, Rideau River, South end of Mooney's Bay at Walkley; Bob Bracken, Christina Lewis, Mark Gawn, Robert Gorman, Ed Leblanc. Adult winter.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

- 2003 - 01 June, Ottawa, Ottawa River, Des Chênes Rapids; Bob Bracken, Chris Lewis, Bob Cermak, Jan Slumkoski. Three adult summer.

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri*

- 2003 - 19 September, Ottawa, Shirleys Bay; Bob Bracken, Chris Lewis, Bruce Di Labio, Bernie Ladouceur, Bev McBride. The bird was moulting into winter plumage. Last time seen; 20 September 2003.

Red-bellied Woodpecker *Melanerpes carolinus*

- 1995 - 26 October, Ottawa, Navan, Trim Road; Christina Lewis, Hal Macpherson, Colin Bowen, Jean McGugan, Gib Moreau, Gordon Pringle, Michael Tate and others. Adult male.

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*

- 2001 - 30 October, Ottawa, Britannia Conservation Area; Marcel Gahbauer.
- 2001 - 31 October, Quebec, Aylmer, Parc Lloyd, Des Chênes Rapids Area; Jean Dubois, Tony Beck, Colin Bowen, Patricia Bowen, Frederic Bédard, Roger Clark, André Cloutier, Bob Gorman, Gisele Grenier, Francine Leduc. Many other birders saw this bird. Last time seen; 09 November 2001.

- Wilson's Warbler** *Wilsona pusilla*
 2003 - 10 October, Ottawa, Billings Bridge where Saw Mill Creek enters the Rideau River; Colin Bowen, Dave Sangster, Patricia Bowen. Male. Late Record Sighting.
- Spotted Towhee** *Pipilo maculatus*
 1993 - 24 January, Ottawa, MacLaren's Landing, Northridge Road; Bernie Ladouceur, Ron Curtis, Bruce Di Labio, Jim Harris and others. Adult male. This is a **First Record** for the Ottawa District.
- Eastern Towhee** *Pipilo erthrophthalmus*
 2003 - 04 January, Ottawa, 2 Rastila Crescent; Robert Gorman, Claire Gorman. **Second Winter Record** for the Ottawa District.
- Chipping Sparrow** *Spizella passerina*
 2002 - 15 December, Ottawa, Amberwood Crescent between Chesswood & Edenbrook; Paul Jones, N. Panesar. This is a late record for the Ottawa District.
- Dickcissel** *Spiza americana*
 2001 - 8 November, Ottawa, Bel-Air Drive; Christina Lewis, Gwen Jenkins, Tony Beck, Roy Jenkins, Jean McGugan, Gordon McLean, Maxine McLean, Larry Neily, Marianne Neily, Bev Scott, Michael Tate and many others. Last seen; 29 November 2001.
 - 9 November, Ottawa, Checkers Road; Gordon Pringle, Gwen Jenkins, Colin Bowen, Louise Campagna and many others. Last seen; 29 November 2001. Same bird as above.
- Meadowlark** *Sturnella sp.*
 2002 - 28 December, Quebec, Heyworth, 550 Chemin des Dominicains; Colin Bowen, Patricia Bowen, Brian Bowen. Could not be determined whether the bird was an Eastern or Western Meadowlark. Accepted as a late meadowlark species.

ACCEPTED REPORTS (Outside the 50km Radius)

These reports were significant reports that were submitted to us by members of the birding community. As the birds were found in areas where there is no local Bird Records Committee, the reports were reviewed by this Sub-committee and also forwarded to the Ontario Birds Records if required.

Ross's Goose***Chen rossii***

- 2001 - 16 April, Ontario, Prescott-Russell Co., North of Riceville; Bob Bracken, Christina Lewis, Robert Cermack, Paul Jones, Bernie Ladouceur, Bev Peterkin, Jean Brisebois, Alan German, Carol German, Bev McBride, Gary McNulty, Dave Moore, Gib Moreau, Bev Scott and Eve Ticknor. Two immatures were seen in flight and 4 or 5 adults were close enough to be well observed. There were more birds on the fringes of the area which were difficult to observe.

American Avocet***Recurvirostra americana***

- 2003 - 14 September, Ontario, Stormont-Dundas-Glengarry Co., Chesterville Sewage Lagoons; Chris Traynor, Bob Bracken, Bob Gorman, Claire Gorman, Mike Jacques, Christina Lewis, Gord McLean, Maxine McLean, Doug Merry and others. Last time seen; 20 September 2003. Photos on file.
- 14 & 15 September, Ontario, Stormont-Dundas-Glengarry Co., Chesterville Sewage Lagoons; Bob Bracken, Chris Lewis, Chris Traynor, Bob Gorman, Claire Gorman, Mike Jacques, Gord McLean, Maxine McLean, Doug Merry, Paul Mirsky and others. Last time seen; 20 September 2003. Photos on file.

UNACCEPTED REPORTS**Identification uncertain**

In many cases the documentation submitted for the following reports was found not to contain enough detail to rule out another species of bird. Also included in this category are reports where the report was of a First Record for the district but was a single observer sighting. These submissions were often of high quality but to obtain First Record status, there must be more than one competent observer or accompanying photo(s). In all cases, if additional documentation is received, these reports will be revisited. Reports that are not voted on are also included here. These may be reports of birds that were submitted but do not require a rare bird report.

- 2003 - **Dickcissel** (*Spiza americana*), 03 August, Ottawa, Mer Bleue Boardwalk.
- 2002 - **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** (*Empidonax flaviventris*), 08 June, Ottawa (Stittsville) Cypress Gardens.

A special thanks to all who took the time to prepare a Rare Bird Report. Your effort is much appreciated by the Bird Records Sub-committee. Thanks also to Ken Allison and Gordon Pringle for their assistance in the preparation of this report.

Coming Events

arranged by the Excursions & Lectures Committee.

For further information,
call the Club number (722-3050).

Times stated for excursions are departure times. Please arrive earlier; leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, don't hesitate to ask the leader. Restricted trips will be open to non-members only after the indicated deadlines.

ALL OUTINGS: *Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and activity. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by car pool.*

REGISTERED BUS TRIPS: *Make your reservation for Club bus excursions by sending a cheque or money order (Payable to The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club) to Box 35069, Westgate P.O., Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 1A2, at least ten days in advance. Include your name, address, telephone number and the name of the outing. Your cooperation is appreciated by the Committee so that we do not have to wait to the last moment to decide whether a trip should be cancelled due to low registration. In order for the Club to offer a bus trip, we need just over 33 people to register. If fewer than 30 register, we have the option of cancelling the trip or increasing the cost. Such decisions must be done a week in advance so we encourage anyone who is interested in any bus trip to register as early as possible. We also wish to discourage postponing the actual payment of bus fees until the day of the event.*

EVENTS AT THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE: *The Club is grateful to the Museum for their cooperation, and thanks the Museum for the use of these excellent facilities.*

BIRD STATUS LINE: *Phone 860-9000 to learn of recent sightings or birding potential in the Ottawa area. To report recent sightings use the 860-9000 number and stay on the line. This service is run on behalf of the Birds Committee and is available to members and non-members.*

Saturday
3 July
9:00 a.m.

ALFRED BOG: A DRIVE IN THE COUNTRY

Leader: Frank Pope

Meet: Elmvale Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, St. Laurent Blvd. at Smyth Road.

Although the 1,000 ft. boardwalk into Alfred Bog will be the primary destination, other stops will be Jessups Falls, Atocas Bay, Alfred sewage lagoons and the Lemieux slide with pauses at the McSkimming Outdoor Centre, Alfred College and the Larose Forest. See the article on last year's trip in the January-March issue of *T&L*. Transportation will be by car pool. Cars may be left at St. Aiden's Church nearby. Expect to be back at St. Aiden's around 4:00 p.m. About 2.5 hrs will be driving time. Bring your lunch which will be eaten in the field. Except for one primitive toilet early in the trip there are no toilet, lunch or coffee stops.

Please register at the Club number 722-3050 by June 30th.

Sunday
11 July
10:00 a.m.
to
12:00 noon

PETRIE ISLAND

Leaders: Al Tweddle and Jim Robertson

Meet: In the parking lot on Petrie Island (Directions: Take the Queensway east and at the fork continue east past Orleans to the Trim Rd. exit. Turn left (North) on Trim Rd. and continue to the end of the road).

Al Tweddle, of Friends of Petrie Island (FOPI), will describe the accomplishments of FOPI to develop a picnic area with nature trails, interpretive displays, including measures to protect the area because of increased usage and FOPI's participation in various studies. Jim Robertson, who has photographed the islands extensively, will offer an up-close and personal view of Petrie. Several OFNC naturalists will be on hand to point out the natural features of the area.

Sunday
18 July
9:00 a.m.

THE DRAGONS OF MORRIS ISLAND

Leaders: Bob Bracken & Chris Lewis

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, north-east corner of the parking lot, Richmond Rd. at Assaly Rd.

The Odonata, comprising dragonflies & damselflies, are an ancient and often overlooked fauna. The Morris Island Conservation Area (approx. 40 km west of Ottawa) continues to be one of the most rewarding places to hunt for these insects. It offers a fantastic variety of species and habitats. (74 species have been recorded here to date, including the spectacular Dragonhunter, one of North America's largest species.) We expect to see as many as 30 species on this outing. The trip will likely continue until ~ 2:00 PM, so bring a lunch, a beverage, and an insect net if you have one. Young people are most welcome - KIDS, BRING YOU PARENTS, and see how good THEY are at catching dragons! If weather is uncertain, call Chris (722-5929) to see if trip is cancelled.

Sunday
25 July
1:00 p.m.

FERN IDENTIFICATION FIELD TRIP

Leader: Bill Arthurs

Meet: Elmvale Shopping Centre, north-east corner of the parking lot, St. Laurent Boulevard at Smyth Road.

This afternoon walk will give participants an opportunity study the diverse ferns in the Mer Bleue Conservation area and get practical experience in using identification keys.

Tuesday
27 July
6:30
to
8:30 p.m.

MUSHROOM IDENTIFICATION

Leader: Otto Loesel

Meet: Fletcher Wildlife Garden

This workshop will cover the distinguishing features of the major groups of macrofungi and related topics of interest. Detailed images will be shown on the computer using the CD "Mille et un champignons du Québec." Participants are invited to bring fungal specimens that are in good condition for identification.

Recommended Reading: Barron, George, "Mushrooms of Ontario and Eastern Canada," 1999, Lone Pine Publishing.

Friday
13 August
7:30 a.m.
to
11:30 a.m.

EARLY FALL MIGRANTS

Leader: Tony Beck

Meet: Elmvale Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, St. Laurent Blvd. at Smyth Road.

On this half-day birding trip we will visit one of the richest places to see early fall migrants, the eastern sewage lagoons.

Sunday
15 August
9:00 a.m.

A SUMMER RAMBLE IN LAROSE FOREST

Leader: Christine Hanrahan

Meet: Costco on Cyrville Rd., north side of building facing Innes Rd.

From Costco it will be a 40 minute drive to Larose Forest, a wonderful place to go for a general nature walk. You will see how a planted forest has evolved over the decades into a mature mixed forest which provides excellent habitat for a variety of wildlife. You will understand why the Conservation Committee, in consortium with others, worked hard to maintain the integrity of this forest. For background information we suggest that you read the article on Larose Forest which appeared in *T&L*, Jan-Mar 2004. Bring a lunch for this hike and wear appropriate footwear. Note that to get into the forest, we shall drive on some unpaved forest tracks.

Sunday
29 August
9:00 a.m.

MINNOWS, MUDPUPIES & MOLLUSCS: CREATURES FROM A HIDDEN WORLD

Leaders: Bob Bracken & Chris Lewis

Meet: Cassels Road, Britannia Conservation Area, near the entrance to the Britannia Filtration Plant.

A fun and enlightening opportunity for people of all ages to observe some of the diverse life forms that dwell under the surface of the water. We hope to identify several species of fish (mainly minnows) as well as locate the region's only true aquatic salamander. This will also be an occasion to learn some of the common molluscs in the Ottawa area. Old running shoes and shorts for wading are suitable attire for those who chose to enter the water with us. Bring a dip net or insect net if you have one, and a snack & beverage for this half-day outing. Young people in particular are encouraged to participate—a great chance to get up close and personal with some of these creatures from a hidden world. If weather is uncertain, call Chris (722-5929) to see if trip is cancelled.

Saturday
4 September
9:00 a.m.

ASTERS & GOLDENRODS

Meet: Giant Tiger parking lot, north-east corner of Blossom Park Shopping Centre, west side of Bank Street, 2.2 km past Hunt Club Road. The last street before the shopping centre is Queensdale St.

Leader: Albert Dugal

Asters and Goldenrods brighten the woods in fall but the various species can be hard to tell apart. Come on this half-day outing to try and sort out the riddle. Back issues of *T&L* 24(4):114-121 on Goldenrods and *T&L* 29(3):89-99 on Asters, or any other field guides would be useful. Bring a snack.

Saturday
11 September
8:00 a.m.

FALL MIGRANTS

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Rd. at Assaly Rd.

Leader: Ken Allison

We will likely be heading west of Ottawa, with stops at Britannia, Ottawa Beach, Shirleys Bay, etc. If other places have been producing good birds, we may switch at the last minute and head elsewhere.

Sunday
12 September
10:00 a.m.
to
12:00 noon

ANNUAL MUSHROOM EXPOSITION OF THE MYCOLOGUES AMATEUR DE L'OUTAOUAIS

Leader: Otto Loesel (look for him inside)

Meet: Centre Jacques Auger, 39 rue Leduc, Gatineau (Secteur Hull)

Entrance is free. One can expect to see between 150 and 250 species of local mushrooms on display, depending upon the amount of rain just before this event. At 10:30 a.m. there will be a summary of the collection, focusing on distinguishing features of the major mushroom groups. This is a great opportunity to see the diversity of mushrooms in our region at this season as well as having a hands on learning opportunity. You are welcome to bring your own samples for identification and to be included in the final tally.

Tuesday

14 September

7:00 p.m.

**Social & Club
business**

7:30 p.m.

Slides

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING

MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPHY NIGHT

Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.

Admission: At least one natural history slide or a digital presentation or \$1 donation to the Alfred Bog Fund.

Many of us take pictures on Club outings or on our own, and this is our opportunity to share some special natural history shots with fellow members. The mix of different topics and different voices makes for an enjoyable evening. Bring your favourite or most recent photography of plants, animals, birds, insects, scenery, etc. (15 images max). We can handle slide and most digital presentations but check with us first about whether you might need to bring your own laptop (e.g., Macintosh users) or whether a CD (most IBM users) would suffice. We would like you to speak briefly about your images, but that is not a requirement. Please contact Fenja Brodo (723-2054) to prearrange your presentation.

Sunday

19 September

9:00 a.m.

to

approximately

5:00 p.m.

LUSKVILLE FALLS

Leaders: Jeff Skevington, Irwin and Fenja Brodo

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Rd. at Assaly Rd.

This will be an invigorating, all-day hike up the escarpment, past the waterfalls to the fire tower and possibly to Lake Charette for a refreshing swim. Autumn is a beautiful time for this general interest hike which traverses several biotypes and should give us much to see along the way. We shall take our time to linger for photography, listen for birds, search out the mushrooms, lichens and wild flowers and taking in the spectacular views from above. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and bring a lunch, drink, hat, binoculars, hand lens, field guides, etc. to take full advantage of all that we might see and hear.

Tuesday
12 October
7:00 p.m.
Social & Club
business

7:30 p.m.
Speaker

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
RARE BIRDS OF EASTERN ONTARIO

Speaker: Bruce Di Labio

Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.

Bruce will be talking about "RARE" birds that have occurred in eastern Ontario over the years. He will speak about his personal experiences with finding and looking for rarities in eastern Ontario; where, when and why he was on the lookout. Questions he will address are: What is a rare Bird? How weather plays an important role in finding rarities. Over 360 species of birds are found in eastern Ontario, but finding a rarity is more than just a possibility. Birds have wings, anything is possible. This will be a slide presentation.

Sunday
17 October
8:00 a.m.

FALL BIRDING IN THE WEST END

Leader: Mark Gawn

Meet: at Ottawa Beach

On this birding trip we will start at the Ottawa beach and bird our way out west of the city. You will see many of the birds that overwinter in the area, and maybe some of the late fall migrants. Dress warmly and bring a snack and a beverage.

Tuesday
9 November
7:00 p.m.

Social & Club
business

7:30 p.m.
Speaker

**OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
EXPLORING THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER
BY CANOE**

Speakers: Janice Dowling & David McNicoll

Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and
McLeod Streets

Join Jan and Dave as they travel by canoe nearly 2000 km on
the North Saskatchewan River, from its source at the
Saskatchewan Glacier to its mouth at Lake Winnipeg. Hear
about the river people they meet along the way, and enjoy
slides of the flora and fauna including gorgeous panoramas of
a seldom-traveled river.

Having canoed over 10 000 km. Jan and Dave bring a serious
wealth of experience to life in a canoe.

POINT PELEE in 2005

Arrangements have already been made for a bus trip to Pointe
Pelee from Thursday 19 May to Sunday 22 May

This is an advance announcement to allow people to plan for
this trip. No reservations are being taken at this time. Look for
details regarding costs and accommodations in the next
(October-December) issue of *T&L*.

DEADLINE: *Material intended for the July - September issue must be in the editor's
hands by August 1, 2004. Mail your manuscripts to:*

Karen McLachlan Hamilton, 2980 Moodie Drive, Nepean, ON, K2J 4S7

H: (613) 838-4943 email: hamilton@storm.ca.

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ISSN 0041-0748



TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

Published by

THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB

Postage paid in cash at Ottawa

Change of Address Notices and Undeliverable Copies:

Box 35069, Westgate P.O.

Ottawa, K1Z 1A2

Return postage guaranteed

Printed by
LOMOR PRINTERS LTD.